

ESC Today

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The Magazine of the 143rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)

JULY 2009



THE WAY WE WERE ... **(STRATEGIC)**
VS.

THE WAY WE ARE NOW ...
(OPERATIONAL)



THE COMMAND POST

BY COL SCOTTIE D. CARPENTER, COMMANDER
143RD SUSTAINMENT COMMAND (EXPEDITIONARY) ARC2



Since its inception more than 100 years ago, the Army Reserve was what we called a “strategic force.” We were a reserve used only as a backup for active duty forces in time of crisis.

Then the world changed. Now instead of a face off between two super powers, global stability is threatened by asymmetrical conflict. The strategic force we had been is not needed and it is apparent that groups from our force are routinely needed at any given time at various locations throughout the world.

We now do more to support the nation's domestic and international policies than ever before and the catalyst was the events of 9-11. Military leaders have predicted our current conflicts will be persistent and that there will be a high demand for reserve forces. We are living our transformation into an “operational force.”

I can bore you with academic definitions about what the differences are between strategic and operational forces, but I will keep it simple. The Army Reserve of years' past was a team that sat on the sidelines and waited to be called into the game. The Army Reserve of today is always in the game, and when one of our players is pulled out of the game to take a rest, another Army Reserve unit relieves it or takes its place somewhere on the playing field.

As an Army Reserve Soldier of days gone by, you could spend an entire career in the reserve and never mobilize. Today, it is not a question of “if” you mobilize, but “when.” Army Force Generation models have most Army Reserve units on a five-year cycle, ensuring we are in the fight and serving in our nation's military campaigns.

So what does this all mean to you? It means that you will have to leave the life you know—your job, school, family—and serve as a Soldier. In order to make that transition smoother, I can't look you in the eyes and ask you to behave like a Soldier just one week-end per month and two weeks a year.

Soldier readiness is instrumental in maintaining a ready, deployable operational force. You can contribute to our operational readiness by ensuring you are proactively postured and ready to deploy.

First, don't wait to be told that you need to attend NCOES or other military schooling. Talk to your leaders and get the education you need. Keeping technically proficient enables you to embrace the challenges of being mobilized and to better do your job downrange. Education gives you knowledge so get trained and get smart.

Second, stay fit. If you think you can withstand the rigors of military duty overseas by doing physical training two days per month, you're mistaken. Ensure you're getting ample exercise when you're out of uniform and eat a healthy diet. This is not only good for the Army, but it is good for you. Even the most sedentary duties are difficult when done in 130-degree heat.

Third, keep your personal affairs in order. There are a lot of moving parts in this area with things like Family matters, legal issues, household matters, finances and such. Ensure you are taking care of your Families and that you have the necessary mechanisms in place before you get mobilized. Do not wait for mobilization orders to make arrangements with those who will watch your car or pay your bills while you're gone. Don't wait to have powers of attorney drafted and or to make arrangements with Family who will help fill the void when you deploy.

Fourth, each year as Army Reserve Soldiers, we receive medical exams. Ensure you strive to keep yourself healthy. See a doctor regularly and visit a dentist. Medical issues are one of the leading causes of deployment disqualification. Don't wait for a doctor or dentist at the mob site to alert you of a problem. Stay healthy by keeping

fit and seeing your doctor and dentist regularly and by getting your periodic health exams provided by the Army Reserve.

Lastly, all of us understand the impact our absences have on our employers. I'm living that right now and by the time all is said and done I will have spent more than a year away from my job. Work with your employers and keep them informed of your duty requirements. If they go above and beyond in supporting you, please recognize them through the many programs offered through the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) program.

If you notice, I do not like to use the term, “Army Reservists.” That term implies that we are a pool of Army personnel waiting to get into the fight. I prefer to use the term “Army Reserve Soldiers.” I think that term more accurately reflects what we are: an operational force, which proactively and continuously delivers well-trained personnel to U.S. operations worldwide. Semantics you might think, perhaps, but make no doubt, the Army Reserve is in the fight and we will continue to be a major contributor in our nation's wars.

Our bench is experienced and professional. I need your help in keeping our operational force ready so when your number is called, whether for the first time or the fifth, you're ready to serve and get into the fight.

THE BOTTOM LINE

BY COMMAND SGT. MAJ. JAMES WEAVER

143RD SUSTAINMENT COMMAND (EXPEDITIONARY) ARC2

In September 2009, the Army will observe Suicide Prevention Month and the theme will be "Improving our Soldiers and Families health: A healthy force combating high risk behaviors." During that month, the Department of the Army will also team with the Defense Department to participate in Suicide Awareness week.

By planning these events and by executing its current suicide awareness and prevention programs, the Army has taken a holistic approach to improve the physical, spiritual and behavioral health of our Soldiers, Families and Civilians. However, it is important for all of us to understand that we should not wait for or need a themed month to take a proactive posture on suicide awareness and prevention.

These key events that are planned for later this year should not be misconstrued by us to mean that we should only think about suicide awareness and prevention during September 2009. Suicide prevention and awareness is something we should be thinking about 24/7, 365 days per year.

If you are a leader, whether you lead one or 1,000 personnel, you have a professional and moral responsibility to plan, coordinate and execute suicide prevention education, awareness and training programs. If you are in a unit that is getting ready to deploy or has returned from deployment, your re-

sponsibilities are that much greater because of the stress our personnel endure during these periods.

There are many ways you can have an effective suicide prevention program that goes beyond showing a Power-Point briefing once per year. Be creative—have guest speakers, displays throughout the year, information booths, ACE (Ask, Care, Escort) and Applied Suicide Intervention Skills training (ASIST), banner and poster displays, and other methods.

Everyone knows that we are all safety officers. The same holds true when it comes to suicide. We all have a responsibility to each other. Leaders must ensure personnel are trained to detect signs of suicidal behavior and leaders must ensure personnel understand the resources available to them in the event they are having suicidal thoughts.

Battle buddies are a critical component to suicide awareness and prevention. If a fellow Soldier, civilian or Family member is giving signals that he or she is a threat to his or herself, it is better to be safe than sorry. Report it and refer them for help. Unit leaders know a lot, but they can't know everything and we all need to be sensors to detect this deadly problem that is plaguing our Army.

In the active Army, there have been 82 reported suicides in 2009—45 confirmed, 37 pending review. In the



Army Reserve, there have been 37 cases in 2009—16 confirmed and 21 potential. Within the 143rd ESC, three of our Soldiers have taken their lives just this year alone.

I urge all of you to take care of each other, get trained and get the help you need. We are all in this together. Most of us have deployed at least once, are enduring challenging economic times and face the same challenges experienced by a lot of Americans.

What separates us from the rest of the country is that we're part of the Army Family and as Family members, we need to take care of each other. So the next time you're in formation look to the left and right of you and ask yourself if someone might need your help, or be brave enough to ask yourself if you're the one that needs help.



ESC Today

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Army Reserve focuses on shaping force after meeting new end-strength

By Donna Miles
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — After reaching its new 206,000-member end strength objective a full year ahead of schedule, the Army Reserve has shifted its focus to shaping the force to ensure it has the proper mix of skills sets and experience levels, the Army Reserve chief told American Forces Press Service.

Army Lt. Gen. Jack C. Stultz lauded the Army Reserve's increase of more than 20,000 Soldiers during the past three years. The Army Reserve exceeded its fiscal 2008 goals by recruiting more than 44,000 Soldiers and re-enlisting more than 16,000 Soldiers.

"Today I can report to you that your Army Reserve is in excellent shape," Stultz told the Senate Armed Services Committee's personnel subcommittee during a March hearing when the Army Reserve had reached 204,000 members. "That's up 7,000 this fiscal year on top of 7,000 last year," he told the panel. "We're growing at a tremendous pace, so recruiting is good, retention is good."

This trend put the Army Reserve on solid footing to achieve its authorized 206,000 end strength a year before the 2010 target. It marks a stark contrast to three years ago,

when Stultz assumed his post with a force of about 186,000 Soldiers.

Stultz told American Forces Press Service he attributes this success to hard work and dedication by recruiters as well as efforts by reservists



themselves. But he also pointed to the importance of recruiting and retention initiatives that supported the Army Reserve's manning strategy. These include the Army Reserve Recruiter Assistant Program, which rewards Soldiers, Family members

and Army civilians who support recruiting and retention efforts, and the Critical Skills Retention Bonus, which helps to retain Soldiers in specific job specialties.

Stultz called these incentives as important to the Army Reserve now as when it was growing its force.

"Some people out there might say we've met our end strength and the economy is bad, so we don't need to pay incentives to Soldiers," he said. "I say that's not true. We might not need as many incentives to attract E-1s into the force, but I need them because I am continuing to shape the force."

This involves training — and especially, retaining — Soldiers in shortage military occupational specialties and encouraging those in over-strength MOSs to retrain into under-strength ones.

The Army Reserve also needs to fill gaps at the noncommissioned officer, captain and major levels, Stultz said. Even after reaching its new end strength, the Army Reserve still is short almost 10,000 captains and majors, Stultz told the Senate Armed Services Committee in March.

The ultimate benefit of the increased Army Reserve end strength won't be immediate, because most of the newest reservists are junior enlisted Soldiers, the general explained.

"It's an investment for the future," he said. "What we need now is to focus on growing our NCO corps and growing our captains and majors."

One way Stultz intends to do that is by recruiting more prior-service Soldiers.

"The Marines say, 'Once a Marine, always a Marine,'" he said. "I like to say, 'Soldier for life.' We find a lot of Soldiers out there who have left the uniform, but the uniform hasn't left them. And when we talk to them, they say they miss it. We're recouping some of them now."

Army Reserve



Army Reserve chief visits 143rd Soldiers in Afghanistan

By Donna Miles

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — The top Army Reserve officer arrived in Afghanistan last month to hear firsthand how his deployed Soldiers are faring, particularly in light of continued demand for their capabilities in both Afghanistan and Iraq.

Army Lt. Gen. Jack C. Stultz told American Forces Press Service he's not interested in shaking hands with general officers or other top officials as he travels around Afghanistan. "I am interested in shaking hands with Soldiers out on the battlefield and finding out what is going on in their minds," he said.

Stultz recalled past visits to the combat theater, where he admits he threw a curve ball to his handlers on the ground, who had scheduled a lineup of Power Point presentations and high-level meetings. "Don't put on some dog and pony show," he told them. "I want to get out and talk with Soldiers."

Stultz sought out Soldiers wherever he could find them, opting for impromptu encounters he hoped might elicit more candid viewpoints. Once, for example, as he was riding along in a Humvee, Stultz got his driver to make a sudden stop so he could chat with a group of Soldiers whose convoy had pulled to the roadside.

"When you sit down and start talking and ask them where they're from and what's going on back home, you can start to get a sense from the Soldier of how they are feeling," he said.

Time and time again, Stultz said, he hears a similar response. "The Soldiers are proud of what they are doing," he said. "Soldiers feel good about what they are doing. They feel good that we are not wasting their time. We are taking care of their

Families. That is why our retention rates are through the roof."

Noting that deployed reservists typically express concern about their Families' well being rather than their own, Stultz said the Army Reserve's increased emphasis on Family support is paying big dividends. "I think they feel better now than two years ago that ... we are doing everything we can to take care of Families," he said.

As he visits with deployed reservists, Stultz said he'll make it clear that the drawdown in Iraq doesn't

support are still needed by the Army Reserve. "The enablers still have to remain there for some time," he said.

Meanwhile, Stultz said, the buildup in Afghanistan means the combat troops arriving there will need more combat support and combat service support that the Army Reserve provides. In light of those requirements, Stultz said he'll tell troops he's working to get them more predictable deployment schedules as quickly as possible.

The Army Force Generation model, once fully implemented, will provide a five-year cycle for reservists to deploy, return home, then get more dwell time before preparing for the next deployment.

This model will bring more predictability to reservists, Families, but also to their civilian employers, Stultz said.

An increase in the Army Reserve end strength, now at 206,000, also promises to reduce stress on the force, he said. But because most of the newest reservists are junior enlisted soldiers, Stultz said the payoff won't be immediate.

"It's an investment for the future, but what we need now is to focus on growing our [non-commissioned officer] corps and growing our captains and majors," he said.

As he talks with Soldiers about their needs and shares with them what's ahead, Stultz said he'll also pass along the support of the American people as a whole, as well as Congress. "I want to reassure them that ... the men and women in uniform have the ultimate respect of this nation for what they are doing."



The Commander, U.S. Army Reserve Command, Lt. Gen. Jack C. Stultz Jr., places private first class rank on newly promoted Pfc. Joshua Ruckman, a 143rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command Headquarters and Headquarters Company light wheel mechanic, during a June 4 promotion ceremony. Stultz visited Reserve Soldiers of Joint Sustainment Command-Afghanistan in June 2009. Photo by Staff Sgt. Marcos Alices

mean there will be less demand for Army Reserve capabilities – at least not in the near term.

"Don't expect our operational tempo to slow down," he said he'll tell the troops. "We are the enabler force. And so, as you draw down brigade combat teams in Iraq, the enablers associated with that don't necessarily decrease simultaneously."

"You still have to have an infrastructure there that supports whatever is going on," the general said. Logistical, transportation, medical, military police and other related

Simple Precautions Can Help With Avoiding the “New” Flu

By Department of Defense
Military Health System

WASHINGTON — There is a new flu in town — and one of the best defenses is taking the offense. “Swine Flu,” more correctly known as H1N1, is at the top of the headlines, and health organizations around the world are working to combat its spread.

Pentagon officials urge precautions—but not alarm—in response to the growing number of reported H1N1 cases.

The Department of Defense (DoD) has been preparing for a situation like this for more than 10 years and has plans, processes and procedures to respond to a pandemic incident. Officials are confident that established protocols and treatments will be effective in

treating this flu, which currently is no more serious than seasonal flu.

Still, officials take H1N1 and seasonal flu very seriously and urge practicing precautionary hygiene like frequent hand washing, covering mouths when coughing or sneezing, and getting a vaccine when one becomes available. In addition, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends getting plenty of sleep, drinking plenty of fluids and eating nutritious foods. Try not to touch surfaces that may be contaminated with the flu virus, and avoid close contact with people who are sick.

The DoD does not recommend use of Tamiflu or other antiviral medication unless it is recommended by a physi-

cian. Use of antiviral medication is not a magic bullet. Use of prescription medications should be carefully discussed with providers and used only when necessary, as all medicines have side effects and should only be taken when medically necessary. Also, inappropriate use of these medications could lead to a shortage of medicine for those who really need it.

Service members and their Families should look for the latest news at the Pandemic Influenza Watchboard at www.dod.mil/pandemicflu, the official DoD site for issues related to this topic. Information is also present at www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu.

Heat and alcohol always a bad mix—especially in summer

By Alexis D. Washington
TRICARE Management Activity

Great weather and long days are key ingredients for a good time. Barbeques, pool parties and trips to the beach are a few common hot weather activities. Summertime is packed with outdoor activities in sweltering summer weather.

One way people often deal with the heat is to reach for a cold drink containing alcohol, but extreme heat and alcohol can be a recipe for injuries, illness and even death.

Alcohol lowers the body's tolerance for heat and acts as a diuretic—meaning it speeds up dehydration—and affects the body's ability to regulate its temperature. The body loses needed fluids through the urination alcohol induces. If fluids in the body

are not replaced, dehydration can be life-threatening.

Alcohol also raises the body's blood pressure, increasing the risk of a heat-related illness like hyperthermia (over heating) and heat stroke (especially for people with high blood pressure).

Signs and symptoms of dehydration include dry lips and tongue, headache, weakness, dizziness, extreme fatigue, dark urine, nausea, and muscle cramps.

Alcohol can affect the central nervous system. It impairs a person's judgment, which can interfere with the ability to make smart choices. Impaired judgment causes a loss of inhibitions and may lead to dangerous behavior. Alcohol also influences balance

and coordination and its effects are heightened by sun exposure and heat. Simple decisions, such as the right time to go inside to get out of the heat or when to drink more water, can be overlooked.

Judgment impaired by alcohol is a leading factor in deaths associated with water recreation. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report alcohol use is involved in up to half of adolescent and adult deaths associated with water recreation and about one in five reported boating fatalities.

The recipe for summer fun is good weather, long days and healthy alcohol-related decisions.

Get more information at: www.tricare.mil/alcoholawareness/.



Mail Call: In the June 2009 issue of *ESC Today*, Soldiers serving at Camp Taji, Iraq were shown wearing variations of their Army Physical Fitness Uniforms. Some of the Soldiers also displayed what one reader considered to be violations of hand signals. The reader wrote: “I do not believe it is in the best interest of the 143rd to have possible violations of hand signal/language portrayed in our photos on page 6, not to mention AR 670-1.” In addition, the reader added: “Page 8 text to photo says ‘(right) photo is on the left.’ The reader also added “Page 11 text to photo says Diamond died in 1945 during a WWI battle. It should read WWII.” Submitted by Master Sgt. Bert Garvin, 257th Transportation Battalion (MC). **EDITOR'S NOTE:** Master Sgt. Garvin, you're correct, per Army Regulation 360-1, Army news publications should ensure Soldiers are within uniform guidelines when shown in Army news photos. As for the hand signals, the Soldiers were having some fun posing for the picture and I figured it would be good for their morale if they were included in the magazine. As for the rest of your comments, you are again, correct. Diamond fought in World War II, not WWI (that was a typo), and I now know my left from my right. Thanks for your sharp eye and most of all, thanks for submitting your letter and comments. Got comments, complaints about this magazine? Please share them with me at steven.alvarez@usar.army.mil.

Despite rumors HUMVEE still made in America

By C. Todd Lopez
Army News Service

WASHINGTON — The military's High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicle, also known as a "HMMWV" or a "Humvee," will continue to be made in the United States, by an American-owned company.

The recent announcement that Detroit-based General Motors will sell their Hummer brand of vehicles to Chinese-based Sichuan Tengzhong Heavy Industrial Machinery Company, has no bearing on the U.S. military's Humvee.

"The Army's Humvee and the civilian Hummer look similar and share a common appearance," said spokesman Lt. Col. Martin Downie. "But the rights to produce those two different vehicles are no longer owned by the same company."

Humvee manufacturer AM General is an American company based in South Bend, Ind. The company produced the first 55,000 Humvees for the Army in 1985. The company continues today to produce the Humvee for the military.

In the early 1990s, AM General began producing a civilian version of the Humvee, calling it a "Hummer." But by the late 1990s, AM General had sold the Hummer name to General Motors.

While GM will sell the Hummer nameplate to Sichuan Tengzhong, the military's Humvee, its designs, unique performance capabilities and technologies will continue to be owned by, and the vehicle produced by, AM General.

Web Site to Open Sign-Ups for Post-9/11 GI Bill Transfers

By Donna Miles
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — The Defense Department issued a policy service members will use to transfer their unused Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to their spouses or children.

Eligible service members will be able to register their immediate family members to receive those benefits now that a new Defense Department Website is live, according to Bob Clark, the Pentagon's assistant director for accessions policy.

The Post-9/11 GI Bill takes effect Aug. 1, offering a two-fold benefit, Clark said. It gives the military a tool to help encourage recruiting and retention, while allowing career service members the first opportunity "to share the benefits they've earned with those they love," he said.

The transferability provision — which Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates pushed after first hearing the idea from a military spouse group at Fort Hood, Texas — has generated a lot of excitement.

To prepare for the anticipated response in the run-up to the Aug. 1 effective date, the department launched a secure Web site so service members can register any immediate family members to receive their unused benefits, Clark said.

The site, <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/TEB/>, will be accessible using a common access card, Defense Department self-service user identification or a Defense Finance and Accounting Service personal identification number.

Eligible service members can register the names of any immediate family member they would like to share their benefits with, even designating how many months of benefits each person named can receive, Clark explained.

The service member's 36 months of benefits — the equivalent of four nine-month academic years — can be transferred to a spouse, one or more children or any com-

bination, he said. The family member must be enrolled in the Defense Eligibility Enrollment Reporting System to receive the benefits.

Service members have the option to use some benefits and transfer remaining benefits to their family.

Even after transferring the benefits, they remain the "property" of the service member who earned them, who can revoke them or re-designate who receives them at any time.

However, new names can be added as long as the member is in the military, but not after separating or retiring, Clark said. So defense officials advise erring on the side of caution and including every eligible family member on the registration form.

When the service verifies that the member is eligible to receive Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits and processes the transferability provisions, the family member will receive a certificate of eligibility that can be used to cover educational costs.

In a nutshell, any enlisted or commissioned member of the armed forces serving on active duty or in the Selected Reserve on or after Aug. 1 will be eligible to transfer their benefits -- as long as they qualify for the Post-9/11 GI Bill and meet specific service requirements, Clark explained.

He emphasized that anyone who has retired or separated from the service before that date — even if it's July 31 — won't be entitled to transfer their benefits. Also excluded will be members of the Individual Ready Reserve and Fleet Reserve.

For more information and to read the full story visit:
www.defenselink.mil/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=54877.

Defense Travel System to Modify Reservation Process

By Sgt. 1st Class Michael J. Carden
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Minor changes are scheduled to take place within the Defense Department's travel reservation system later this summer to support the Transportation Security Administration's new pre-flight screening program, a Defense Department official said today.

Under the current format, when travelers arrange flight, hotel and rental car reservations online at the Defense Travel System Web site, the only personal information the site processes through to the vendors is the traveler's first name, last name and middle initial. But after the system and Website modifications take effect, the traveler's date of birth and gender will be included to comply with the TSA's Secure Flight Program, said Pam Mitchell, director of the Defense Travel Management Office.

Defense travelers will be prompted by a pop-up screen from the DTS Web site to add the information, as well as to enter their name as it appears on their government-issued identification card. The change will be minimally inconvenient to the traveler, as the information will be entered only once then saved to their profile,

Mitchell said.

The program is an outcome of the 9/11 Commission, and it basically streamlines the process of identifying potential passengers deemed a match on the FBI-generated watch list screened by the airlines, Paul Leyh, the program's director, said.

Before the program officially began last month, the various airlines each had their own screening processes, which was inconsistent and inconvenient for many travelers, Leyh said. It's not uncommon for a passenger's information to be identified as a match on one airline's list but cleared through another's, he added.

"From carrier to carrier, because the process is different, it's inconsistent across all carriers," he said.

"Throughout the world there are hundreds of carriers, and it could be kind of a crap shoot for people. But with Secure Flight, it's going to be the same process for that person regardless of the carrier."

With the Secure Flight Program, the TSA eventually will become the sole prescreening agency for all airline passengers. The program officially started in May with several domestic airlines, but within 18 months, every airline —

international and domestic — that travels within, to, from and over the United States will be phased into the program, he said.

This will improve the safety of more than 2.5 million people, Leyh added. Also, travelers who've been misidentified as a close-enough match on the watch list can apply for a redress number through TSA to prevent future inconveniences. If cleared, the redress number also will be added to their profile in DTS.

"With nearly every commercial airline participating, watch list matching is going to be more effective, which is going to allow us to clear more people and focus on those potential travelers that are considered as a close enough match," he said.

The program will virtually go unnoticed by the passengers, officials said, as no changes to the airline check-in or security checkpoint procedures are involved. Once defense travelers make the initial modifications to their profile on the DTS Web site, officials added, the program's changes will not affect them unless their information matches the watch list.

Obama Signs Memo Opening Benefits to Same-Sex Couples

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama signed a memorandum last month opening up benefits to same-sex couples and forbidding discrimination in the federal workplace.

"We've got more work to do to ensure that government treats all its citizens equally, to fight injustice and intolerance in all its forms, and to bring about that more perfect union," Obama said before signing the memorandum. "I'm committed to these efforts, and I pledge to work tirelessly on behalf of these issues in the months and years to come."

The president announced his support of the Domestic Partners Benefits and Obligations Act now before Congress. The act will guarantee the rights for all federal employees, he said.

Obama also called on Congress to repeal the Defense of Marriage Act. "I believe it's discriminatory, I think it interferes with states' rights, and we will work with Congress to overturn it," he said.

The president's memorandum directs the Office of Personnel Management to issue guidance within 90 days to all executive departments and agencies regarding compliance with, and implementation of, civil service laws, which make it unlawful to discriminate against federal employees or applicants

for federal employment on the basis of factors not related to their job performance.

The memo does not include health benefits or survivor benefits.

Fifty-seven percent of Fortune 500 companies currently provide domestic partner benefits, as do 16 states and more than 200 local governments. These entities offer the benefits "not only because it's the right thing to do, but because they recognize that it helps them compete for and retain the best possible talent — and we need top talent serving their country right now more than ever," Obama said.

For the complete article visit <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=54818>.

Newly restructured personnel command readies for combat zone

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. W. Watson Martin
319th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORT JACKSON, S.C. — Willie Mays held his 10-month-old daughter Jessica, as he watched his young wife, Sgt. Lexis Penny-Mays, stand in formation for a going away ceremony here June 20.

"This is my first deployment, so I'm a little nervous and will definitely miss my family," said Penny-Mays, an administrative specialist. "It'll especially be hard not be here for Jessica's first birthday."

Her Army Reserve unit, the 310th Human Resources Sustainment Center based here, will deploy to Kuwait for a one-year tour this summer. Officials said they will be the first Army Reserve HRSC to deploy to a combat zone.

"I'm very honored to help lead our Soldiers on this mission," said Sgt. Major Catherine Berner, the 310th HRSC sergeant major. "We'll report to the 1st Theater Sustainment Command in Kuwait and begin tracking personnel actions of troops throughout the theater of operations to include Iraq and Afghanistan."

"As for leaving home, I'm definitely going to miss my husband Ray and my students at William Hubbard Middle School in Forsyth, Ga.," Berner said.

But unlike Mays, this is not the first deployment for Berner.

"This is my mom's fourth deployment," said Davilan Berner as his 5- and 6-year-old nieces, Kayleigh "Bug" and Kyla "Wyla" played in the bleachers. "I think it's important for the girls to see their grandmother at this ceremony."

"When I was five I remember going to one of these before she headed off for Desert Storm, and it helped me make better sense of her going away," he said.

The ceremony allowed the leadership to reassure the Families and praise the troops' professionalism.

"Together, I assure you, we will get the mission done, we'll do it safely, and we'll come home," said Col. Richard L. Scheider Sr., the director of the 310th HRSC.

The 310th HRSC is a subordinate unit of the 143rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command.

The mission of the 310th is to plan coordinate and synchronize theater level human resources operations including postal operations, casualty reporting and personnel accountability. It will assist the 1st TSC by synchronizing human resources operations with logistics.

The 310th Human Resources Sustainment Center has more than 80 Soldiers and will serve their tour at Camp Arifjan after completing pre-deployment training in Wisconsin.

(BELOW) "Wyla" Berner watches as her grandmother, Sgt. Maj. Catherine Berner prepares to depart for her yearlong deployment. (BOTTOM) Willie Mays holds his 10-month-old daughter Jessica, as his wife, Sgt. Lexis Penny-Mays, stands in formation at a deployment ceremony at Fort Jackson, S.C. June 20. Penny-Mays serves as a personnel specialist with the 310th Human Resources Sustainment Center headed for Kuwait later this summer.



941st hopes it has the right ingredients to succeed

By Staff Sgt. Shane Slaughter
319th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CHARLESTON, SC — Deep in the woods at the Naval Weapons Station, a small Army unit brought to life a temporary camp with the hum of a generator.

Gradually, lights came on, burners were lit as Soldiers from the 941st Transportation Company began the day preparing a meal which they hoped would bring prestige and notoriety to their unit.

The 941st Transportation Company represented the 143rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) as it competed for the Philip A. Connelly Award, named in honor of the late Philip A. Connelly.

Connelly was the former president of International Food Service Executives Association and became a leader in food service management. He worked to promote food services in both the civilian industry and military services.

Established in March 1968, the award recognizes excellence in the preparation and serving of food in Army troop dining facilities and field kitchen operations.

This year 13 units from the U.S. Army Reserve will compete globally to become recognized as one of the best in an awards ceremony to be held by the Department of the Army in Reno, Nevada in April 2010.

"We are honored to be going into this competition," said Capt. Christian Adams, the 941st commander. "Hopefully we will win in at least one of the five categories."

As the day wore on the temperatures in the cramped mobile kitchen trailer caused the cooks to sweat.

"I'm very nervous," said Sgt. Toshia Goodwin, the first cook in the kitchen

trailer. "It's more of a learning experience than a competition."

While some Soldiers cooked, others cleaned dishes.

"We are responsible for ensuring everything is sanitized," said Staff Sgt. Sandra Robinson, who took charge of the steamy sanitation tent. "We represent the commander."

A representative from US. Army Reserve Command, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Danny Tindle, checked the progress of the competitors.

He assessed the day's progress on ten key areas of importance: organization, accounting procedures, rations handling, field food service sanitation, command support, attitude of food ser-

attesting to their significant accomplishments. Winners also earn an expense paid trip to culinary conferences and schools. A 143rd ESC unit has won the competition three times.

(LEFT BELOW) Peeled potatoes head for the door as other Soldiers from the 941st Transportation Company peel more as they compete in the Philip A. Connelly Award competition in May 2009. The 941st competed in the field with 12 other units in the Department of the Army's annual Philip A. Connelly competition for most outstanding food service operation. (BELOW) Sgt. Toshia Goodwin, a food service specialist, dishes out freshly cooked corn in final preparation of the day's meal. Photos by Staff Sgt. Shane Slaughter, 319th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment.



vice personnel, serving troop acceptability, kitchen site selection and layout, use and maintenance of equipment and food preparation and quality.

"Each unit has 1,000 points to start and deductions are made according to the deficiency," said Tindle who used a field category competition checklist to mark the results.

"Competition or not, I'm gonna do it," said Sgt. 1st Class Alphonzo Major, 941st NCOIC. "It's more than cooking, you're preparing a meal."

The winners in all five categories will receive silver bowls and runner-ups will receive plaques

Logisticians celebrate accomplishments at ceremony

By Devon Hylander
Army G-4

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — June 2 marked the 5th Annual Chief of Staff of the Army, Combined Logistics Excellence Awards ceremony and banquet. Attended by nearly 500 Soldiers, civilians and family members, these two events recognized 95 units that excelled in deployment, supply and maintenance activities over the past year.

Hosted by the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Army for Logistics, the ceremony and banquet unites three logistics-focused awards programs - the Army Award for Maintenance Excellence, the Supply Excellence Award and the Deployment Excellence Award. Each award has numerous categories to which units apply. This year, evaluators reviewed applications from nearly 300 units - a dramatic 17 percent increase from the previous year.

Lt. Gen. Mitchell Stevenson, the DCS for Logistics and the ceremony keynote speaker, told the awardees, "You represent the very best in logistics. When I look at this sea of Soldiers and civilians, I see not

only 95 winners, but 550,000 boots on the ground who win by the work your units do every day to enhance Army readiness."



CW3 Francisco J. Montilla (center front row) and CW2 Chris Schiavi (right, front row), both of the 332nd Transportation Battalion (Terminal) pause for a photo with fellow warrant officers from the 377th TSC and from US Army Reserve Command. Photo from Francisco Montilla

The applications for the 2009 CLEAs are already rolling in. Both applicants and evaluators expect 2009 to be one of the biggest years yet in the history of these awards.

For more information on how your unit can apply to the Maintenance, Deployment or Supply Excellence Awards, visit the CLEA AKO Web site.

Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 332nd Transportation Battalion, 143rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command, were runners up for the Deployment Excellence Award in the Small unit category. Chief

Warrant Officer 2 Chris Schiavi and Chief Warrant Officer 3 Francisco Montilla received the award.



520th Transportation Company Returns from Iraq

(LEFT) Spc. Erin McDonough of the 520th Transportation Company hugs her daughter, Haylee, after arriving at the 1st Lt. David R. Wilson Armed Forces Reserve Center in Orlando June 26. (BELOW CENTER) Spc. Christopher Sadowski kisses his 2-month-old daughter after returning with the 520th, his second tour in Iraq. (BELOW RIGHT) Staff Sgt. Edward Velez greets his 8-month-old daughter, Celia, who was born while he was in Iraq with the 520th. Photos by Capt. Steve Alvarez



From jungles to desert: Vietnam veteran continues to serve

Courtesy 3rd Sustainment Command

AL ASAD AIR BASE, IRAQ — From the jungles of Vietnam to the streets of New York City to the deserts of Iraq, one Army noncommissioned officer has proved his dedication to the country through decades of service.

A 58-year-old veteran of the Vietnam War, Sgt. 1st Class Luis R. Laluz, 321st Sustainment Brigade, said he remembers spending 1969 and 1970 face down in a rice paddy with an NCO by his side. Now, 40 years later, he's the veteran NCO all young Soldiers look up to for inspiration and advice.

Laluz, who started his service as a member of the Army Reserve in New York City, admitted he thought he was done with overseas deployments; he did his time in a combat zone and that was enough.

"But how can you put a limit to it?" said the Staten Island, N.Y., native. "You can do five years, 20 years, 30 years -- is it really enough when your country needs you?"

The war on terrorism hit close to home for the New York City police officer, who lost two relatives on 9/11.

With a harsh, rapid-fire New York City accent and a stocky, muscular build, Laluz stands out from most Sol-

diers in the 321st, a Reserve unit from Louisiana. The amateur bodybuilder, who started lifting weights when he was 12 years old, won the Mr. New Jersey Shore and Mr. America titles in 1983 and 1989, respectively.

Laluz said he was selected to promote physical fitness training in his unit because of his extensive background in bodybuilding. He's personally taken Soldiers under his guidance to show them how to exercise properly, eat healthy and change years of bad lifestyle habits.

One such Soldier is Sgt. Joshua S. Moak, a senior land manager from Baton Rouge, La.

Moak lost 40 pounds in two-and-a-half months under Laluz's tutelage. He described his first day working out with Laluz as one of excruciating pain.

"When we were done, we couldn't raise our arms above our heads," he said. "The next day, I couldn't move my arms at all, but we kept at it."

An NCO's duty, Laluz said, is to look out for the welfare of his Soldiers. His proudest moment was helping a Soldier pass her physical fitness test for the first time in years. They would exercise and eat together, to ensure

she ate only healthy, all-natural foods.

"The more they ask me questions, the more I get motivated, the more I want to help them," Laluz said. "Anybody can learn how to work out. I could teach a chimpanzee how to pick up a dumbbell."

The most important aspect to physical fitness, Laluz stresses over and over again to his Soldiers, is proper nutrition and lifestyle choices. That's the key to getting in shape and staying in shape, he said.

Moak said he tried to lose weight and get in shape for years. It took the proper guidance and motivation from Laluz to put him on the path to success.

"I had no idea you could get in shape so quickly. His program's way better than anything I could have done on my own," Moak said, adding that he was told to exchange his uniforms for a smaller size because his were too big.



(RIGHT) Sgt. 1st Class Luis R. Laluz supervises Sgt. Joshua S. Moak during a workout in a gym at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, May 4, 2009. Moak lost 40 pounds in two-and-a-half months in Laluz's physical fitness program. (LEFT) Laluz, of Staten Island, N.Y., offers Soldiers weight-lifting tips at Al Asad Air Base gym. An amateur bodybuilder and former bodybuilding champion, Laluz started a physical fitness program for Soldiers in his unit, the 321st Sustainment Brigade. Photos by Spc. Kiyoshi C. Freeman

Army cracking down on BAH fraud

By Sgt. Stephen Choice

143rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), Office of the Staff Judge Advocate

ORLANDO, FLA — Basic Allowance for Housing fraud and travel claims abuse have become increasingly costly problems in the Army Reserve. Detection and prosecution of these offenses is ramping up. A report recently put out by the Headquarters Department of the Army Internal Review Office details the problem.

The report, "Review of Temporary Change of Station Program Report Number: 09-001," HQDA Internal Review Office, Assistant Secretary of the Army (Financial Management Comptroller), dated 1 October 2008, estimates that at least \$24.2 million was paid to Soldiers who submitted potentially fraudulent travel claims while on TCS (Temporary Change of Station) orders. TCS orders are typically the type cut for Soldiers who serve stateside for longer than six months.

The investigation that the report's authors undertook reviewed travel claims for 4,197 of the 43,405 Soldiers who were on TCS status for one or more tours between 1 September 2001 and 31 October 2007. It was found that 476 Soldiers (11 percent) submitted potentially fraudulent travel claims. Another 1,972 Soldiers (47 percent) submitted travel claims with expenses that were wasteful or abusive. All potentially fraudulent claims were submitted to the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Division (CID) for further investigation.

As of March 2008, CID agents had completed investigations on 46 of the 476 potentially fraudulent cases and referred 35 Soldiers to

the judiciary system for courts-martial, if deemed appropriate. As of June 2008, 28 of the 35 Soldiers had their cases in various stages of the courts-martial process or had received non-judicial punishment under Article 15 proceedings.

Disturbingly, these abuses have been disproportionately committed by senior leadership. Just under 60 percent of the potentially fraudulent claims detected were submitted by field grade officers (O4-O6) or senior NCOs (E7-E9).

In one case, a colonel deployed in Washington, D.C. submitted false rental receipts over a 52-month period during which he claimed to have paid from \$4,500 to \$5,795 a month for rent. In reality, he was living for free with his sister. He was convicted and sentenced to 6 months confinement, fined \$250,000, ordered to pay restitution of nearly \$270,000 and dismissed from service.

In another example, a lieutenant colonel rented the priciest unit at the Lenox Club in Arlington, Virginia for nearly four years. The 1,600 square-foot penthouse was furnished with "The Presidential" accommodations packages.

Soldiers in the capital aren't the only ones getting caught. While the report did cite the D.C. area as the top location for detection of fraud and abuse, these activities are being prosecuted in every corner of the Army Reserve. This includes the 143rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

"Unfortunately, BAH or TCS fraud is prevalent throughout the Army in general and the Army Re-

serve specifically," said Maj. Daryl Manning, staff judge advocate for the 143rd. "We've been instructed by USARC (U.S. Army Reserve Command) to pay special attention to these cases."

Soldiers who feel comfortable with taking the chance that they won't be the one detected are in for some bad news.

"CID agents have been embedded at DFAS (Defense Finance and Accounting Service) and are tasked with reviewing each and every travel voucher," said MAJ Manning. "There's no point in trying to take your chances because they're checking everybody."

There are steps Soldiers can take to protect themselves from inadvertently getting caught in this net. One is to consult your Finance section and inquire about what expenses DFAS will authorize. Another would be to call DFAS directly. Seeking advice from other Soldiers with more experience submitting travel vouchers will help clear up questions, as well as serve to keep your superiors informed about your honest intentions. This may be of paramount importance later, if some issue is raised concerning your claims.

While submitting fraudulent or exaggerated travel claims is an unfortunate reality, it appears to be one activity that's being targeted for extinction. While the Army will probably never completely eradicate these abuses from its ranks, heightened detection and conviction of those that commit these offenses should make any Soldier think twice.

News Briefs

Reserve Components Mobilized

As of June 9, 2009, the total number of Reserve Component personnel on active duty from the Army National Guard and Army Reserve is 110,024; Navy Reserve, 6,792; Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve, 15,066; Marine Corps Reserve, 9,115; and the Coast Guard Reserve, 759. This brings the total National Guard and Reserve personnel who have been activated to 141,756, including both units and individual augmentees.

Security Agreement Implemented

The Department of Defense announced last month that, in accordance with the security agreement between the United States and Iraq signed last year, U.S. combat forces have left Iraqi cities, villages and localities.

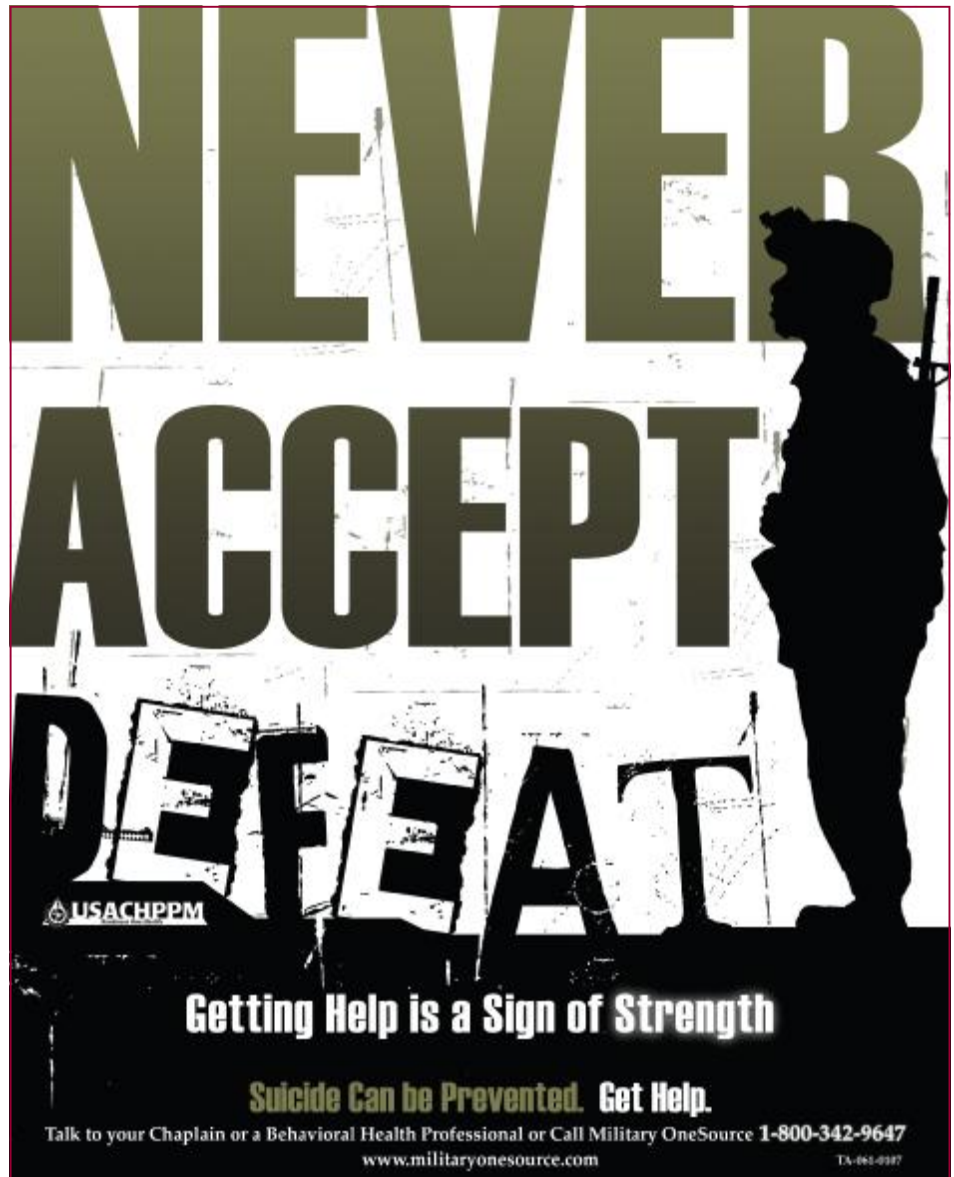
At the forefront of creating a sovereign, stable and self-reliant Iraq and developing an environment of political and economic growth, significant investments have been made in infrastructure, training, equipment, essential services, and the institution of rule of law to benefit all Iraqis.

As U.S. combat forces move out of the localities, Iraqi security forces (ISF) are assuming responsibility for security, a significant step for Iraq.

"The United States is committed to full, transparent, and continued implementation of the security agreement in a spirit of partnership with the sovereign nation of Iraq. Iraqi security forces continue to take the lead in the security and stability of Iraq," said Gen. Ray Odierno, commanding general, Multi-National Force Iraq.

U.S. forces outside urban areas will continue to conduct operations by, with, and through, ISF, focusing on securing Iraqi borders and areas outside the cities.

To date, more than 150 U.S. bases have been closed or returned to Iraq since January 2008. U.S. troop strength has decreased to 131,000 from a high of 165,574 in September 2007. Additionally, more than \$15 million of property has been transferred to the Iraq. The United States will continue to reduce both number of bases and combat forces in 2010 through the end of 2011.



ESC Today Now Available Online!

ESC Today, the monthly magazine of the 143rd ESC is now available online at the 143rd ESC's new Internet Website at:

www.armyreserve.army.mil/143esc

The site is updated weekly with news from around the 143rd ESC. The magazine is located in the news section of the Web site.